



THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO

Storm Water Pollution Prevention Program

Sewer Overflows from Private Property

When it rains or when water flows out of yards or over pavement, it flows directly into storm drains. Many people mistakenly believe this water gets "cleaned" before reaching waterways. The sewer system and the storm water conveyance system are separate; they are not connected. Sewer water gets treated, but everything that washes into the storm water conveyance system goes untreated directly into our rivers, creeks, bays and ocean. This causes beach closures and postings due to contamination. Releasing pollutants into the storm water collection system is a violation of the City Municipal Code, (43.0301).

Overflows from broken private sewer pipes happen everyday. When they do occur, it is imperative that the polluting substances- sewage water, grease globs, hairballs, tree roots, sediment, leaves, other organic or chemical matter and the like -are prevented from entering the City's storm water conveyance system. It's important to control, contain and capture the overflow. Here are some Best Management Practices you can choose to adopt:

Sewer Laterals: Property owners are responsible for the proper maintenance of the sewer lateral that extends from your property to the City sewer main. Repairs to the lateral that are made within the private property line are the responsibility of the property owner. All repairs to the private lateral in the City Right-of-Way will be completed by the City of San Diego upon proof from a licensed plumber that repairs are required. The sewer lateral is composed of the pipe-system that carries used wastewater from your home, business, or property to the City's Sanitary Sewer collection and treatment system.

Sewer Stoppages, Breaks and Overflows on your property: Turn off water **As Soon As Possible** to control the flow. Provide containment (sandbags, dirt, etc.) that will prevent flow from discharging into the Storm Water Conveyance System. You may want to call a plumbing professional for assistance. **It is the property owner's responsibility to capture remaining sewage effluent** that may be in the curb, gutter and street and to properly dispose of it into the sanitary sewer system as soon as possible. **This is a public health hazard.** Cleaning of the waste can occur as soon as the flow has stopped and while the emergency repair is being worked on. Be sure to check, and clean the curbs and gutters beyond your property - all the way to the nearest storm drain inlet.

Sewer Stoppages, Breaks and Overflows in the City Right-of-Way: If you believe the stoppage, break or overflow effecting your property is coming from pipes in the City Right-of-Way, you **must have a licensed plumber verify that it is in the City's domain.** Should you observe sewage seeping from a City manhole, call (619) 515-3525.

Flushing Sewer Lines (I.E. Rodding, Jetting, Snaking, etc): Clean-out caps are intended to be used as a relief valve to prevent sewage from flowing into the home, and to provide access to maintain your sewer lateral. When flushing sewer lines, all wastewater and dislodged material and debris must be contained on your property, recaptured and properly disposed of.

Tips to help you prepare for an overflow-

- Provide routine and regular maintenance of your sewer lateral
- Locate and know how to operate your water shut-off valve
- Use spill absorbent materials instead of water as a final cleaning step

Adopt these behaviors and help Clean up our beaches and bays.

Think Blue, San Diego. For more information, call (619) 235-1000, or log on to: www.thinkbluesd.org

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&
Act
Blue

